From Scott Scheirman KR7D

Comments on Proceeding #25-133 – Motion to Dismiss

Summary

I encourage you to dismiss Proceeding #25-133.

Federal expenses for Amateur Radio are insignificant because of user fees and volunteer efforts.

The rewards to the public are immense. Amateur Radio Emergency Services reported over 718,930 hours of volunteer emergency services in 2017 [1]. People who become Amateur Radio operators ('hams') often go on to careers in science, technology, engineering, or math (I am one of them). Amateur Radio operators are involved locally, nationally, and internationally.

Instead, ***become*** an amateur radio operator. To learn how, visit https://www.arrl.org/licensing-education-training.

My Experience

Amateur radio has been a life-long hobby, which led to a successful career.

As a teen, I earned my first Amateur Radio ('ham radio') license, a Second-Class Commercial Radio license, and volunteered as an Assistant Emergency Coordinator for Connecticut.

As an adult, I earned a Bachelor of Science in Electrical and Computer Engineering from Oregon State University.

Professionally, I designed medical products (EKG and stress test machines) that saved thousands of lives, and scientific products (spectrum analyzers) that helped ensure automobile and rocketry safety.

As an adult ham, I've served as the Assistant Emergency coordinator for my county. That led me to help a local hospital design and install a solar powered emergency radio system.

I was Washington State Director for Military Auxiliary Radio Services ('MARS'). In that role, I managed a regional radio network during 'Cascadia Rising', an interagency (MARS, WA National Guard, FEMA, …) simulated disaster to help plan response for a potentially devastating earthquake.

I've won a few ham radio contests 'solo' and as part of a team.

Why do I mention my background?

Over the many years, and tens of thousands of contacts with other hams, on the air and in person, I've learned that Amateur Radio Operators are involved with their families, communities, and volunteer organizations not only to enjoy their hobby, but also to serve as emergency communicators should the need arise.

Rivers will rise, winds will blow, fires will burn, the earth will shake, and 'backhoes happen' – any of which can and has interrupted normal communications. Organized and ad hoc amateur radio operations can and do help in those situations.

Who is motivated to take the amateur radio bands?

I have no inside knowledge of who wants to take the Amateur Radio bands, but I can guess. From physics we know that radio waves travel at the speed of light, much (over 1000 times) faster than the internet. Who cares? Perhaps a stock trader who can 'get there first' to trade and profit. We also know that telecommunications companies sell bandwidth.

Recommendation

The commission must choose whether to benefit the few who might get rich(er), or to provide a much larger societal benefit by fostering a near century old Amateur Radio service which is

essentially zero-expense, advances our nation’s technical expertise, and provides a ready source of emergency volunteers for disasters.

I strongly encourage you to dismiss Proceeding #25-133.

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[1] The Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES) 2017 Annual Report: https://www.arrl.org/files/file/Public%20Service/ARES/ARES%202017%20Report.pdf